

twelve and we would rise stiffly to go to an icy bed.

We haven't seen Thad now for five years. He writes to us in an awkward, childish scrawl about the lodge. He always

says the same thing, but it's good to see his funny scratching on yellowed paper.

And he never fails to end the letters with

"Respecttfully, Thaddeus."

Boy On A Bike

BETTY JO FARK

Clouds of heat were sitting on the highway. There was no breeze to stir them perceptibly. The boy was hot. He wanted to keep his feet high, away from the burning sun fused in the pavement, but the motion of the bicycle pedals kept drawing them down monotonously. His hands on the rubber grips of the handlebars were sweaty and uncomfortable. Streaks down both legs of his salt and pepper wash trousers showed where he had tried to wipe away the stickiness.

He tried riding "no-handed." The trial was unsuccessful. Having to slide the least bit from side to side because his legs were short was rather tricky, and, besides, riding "no-handed" decreased his speed. He sighed and resignedly gripped the handlebars again. His mother had told him to come straight home after working at the store because they were having company for supper. In spite of her instructions, he had stopped for a few minutes to take a swim with the gang in the old gravel pit a mile back on the highway. Now he had to hurry to make up for his stolen time.

He pedaled faster. He was sure glad he had saved his money to get his new, red bike. He could really travel fast on it.

A car honked in back of the boy. Promptly he coasted off the highway onto

the shoulder of the road, leaving a miniature whirlwind of dust in his wake. If he had a horn, he would honk right back at the car. His bike was just as good as any car. It could go almost as fast as a car; it wasn't as expensive; it could go places a car couldn't go, and his bike was twice — no ten times — as shiny as any old car. Gee, he was proud of his bike.

He turned to watch the car go by. His eyes met the cold stare of a boy about his own size in the back seat of the car. He squared his narrow shoulders and began to pedal fast again. Riding fast created a cooling breeze around his face and the open neck of his blue sport shirt. He wondered if the boy in the car had a bike.

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"How much longer before we get home and I can get out of this hot car?" Ted asked his mother.

"About two more hours, dear," his mother answered. "We're more than half way there. We'll stop and rest for a while at the next town if you're tired."

"I'm tired, too," Sue added from the back seat.

"All right," her mother said. "We'll get a soda or something and then you'll both feel better."

"I don't like sodas. I want a malt," Ted said.

"You can get a malt then," Mrs. Brown answered, and changed her position in the front seat to ease her tired back. A vacation was hardly worth such a long, hot car trip. The children were so impatient.

"I don't think Ted should have a malt. They cost five cents more than a soda," Sue was saying. "And besides if he gets one, I get one, too."

"All right, you have one, too," Mrs. Brown said. "Just stop arguing now."

The children lapsed into a pouting silence until Mr. Brown honked the horn of the car and said, "Look at that boy on a bike. He is wearing a sport shirt almost like yours, Ted."

"Aw, everybody has a sport shirt like mine," Ted grumbled. "And I wouldn't be as hot if I were riding a bike now. Look, he can hardly reach the pedals. My legs are a lot longer than his. If he's big enough to have a bike, I don't see why I can't have one."

"Gimme, gimme, gimme — you always want everything you see, Ted Brown," Sue said. "Why don't you sit still and stop shaking the seat. You're making me get hotter and hotter."

"I don't care how hot you get," Ted retorted. "I should get a bike. Jim has a bike, and Tom has one, and Jack and Bob are getting new ones this summer."

"Mother, make Ted be quiet," Sue said. "He's always talking about a bike."

"All right, Sue, don't say any more. I'll take care of Ted," Mrs. Brown said, and turning to Ted, she continued, "You know what we decided about a bicycle, Ted. You will get one when you start to high school, so there's no need to argue about it now."

"But mother, I won't start to high school for two more years. And all the other fellows have bikes. It wouldn't

cost you and Dad much, and just think of all the places I could go on a bike. I bet I could use one a lot more than that boy back there," Ted said.

"There's no use talking about it. You can't have a bike now," Mrs. Brown said and turned around in her seat with finality.

"Dad, can't I get a bike now?" Ted coaxed. "The fellows will call me a sissy if I don't have one."

"You heard what your mother said. Now be still or you won't ever get one," Mr. Brown replied.

Ted accepted the ultimatum sullenly and leaned back in his seat.

"Ha, ha, ha, Teddy is a sissy. Teddy is jealous," Sue began to sing.

"Am not," Ted countered as he made a face at Sue.

"Children, for goodness sake, be quiet. I'm tired, too," Mrs. Brown said.

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My, today was a hot day, Mrs. Jenkins thought as she glanced at the thermometer on the front porch. Ninety-nine degrees, she read. It must be still hotter on the highway where there were no shade trees. And there was no breeze today. The heavy air seemed to settle all around her as she stood on the porch. It seemed to press against her gently, but insistently, as though it were trying to melt her away into nothing.

Why pretend to worry about the heat, she thought. Actually, she had come out on the porch to look for Dick. He should have been home almost an hour ago. He had promised to come straight home after he finished working at his uncle's store at two o'clock. It was three o'clock now, and it didn't take more than fifteen minutes to get home on his bike.

Riding the bike was faster than walking, Mrs. Jenkins thought, but it was

a bigger worry. So many things could happen to a small boy of nine on a bike. Dick had probably forgotten he promised to come home early and had stopped to play with some other boys, but then, again, he might try to ride too fast and fall off the bike. His feet barely reached the pedals, and he rode like the wind.

Mrs. Jenkins folded her arms and squinted at a small dot down the highway. It wasn't Dick. It was a car. There wasn't much traffic today, but, still, it would take only one car to crush a boy on a bike. All this worry was unnecessary, she decided. She had cautioned Dick about getting off the highway when cars approached, and he would heed her warning, if for no other reason than to keep his bike safe.

He was proud of that bike. He had worked hard to get it, saving every penny he earned at the store and all the gift money he received. She hadn't wanted him to have a bike until she realized how much he wanted one.

She sighted another dot down the highway. This time it was Dick. He had felt so important when the two of them had gone into town last week to pick out the bike, she thought as she turned away from the highway and walked toward the house. Dick would be home any minute, and she didn't want him to know she was anxious about the bike. Riding a bike was probably as safe as walking. She supposed she would outgrow her anxieties eventually.

Eternal Cycle

MARY CORY

TODAY . . . She walks alone among the ruins of
a shattered state. She thieves, she lies,
she kills, corrupts and hates.

YESTERDAY . . . She laughed and sang, she gave
away with joy what she needed not. She loved
all things, but most of all, her own mirth.

TOMORROW . . . She will profess to strive, but
enjoy her weakness more. One will cross
her in her way and she will not forgive.

Then she will kill and hate, partially mend
the wrong, laugh and sing, falsely strive,
be crossed and not forgive.

Would that she would truly love, and although
crossed, forgive and truly love again.